

CPYRGHT

ONLY HUMAN

By Sidney Fields

# Electronic Diogenes

It was the defense attorney who called in Cleve Backster to give a lie detector test to his client, Leroy Harrison, 41, a printer charged with killing pretty Phyllis Ann Jones, 24, and dumping her body in a pit off Route 539 in New Jersey.

"A private investigator worked for months to help establish Harrison's innocence," Backster said. "But the lie detector test confirmed his guilt. He confessed. His lawyer pleaded him guilty to second degree murder to escape the death penalty. He got 25 to 30 years."

Backster, crew cut, 40, and highly energetic, is one of the country's leading polygraph or lie detector experts. He set up lie detection centers for a dozen police departments, including New York

## Commissioned in Navy

He's from Lafayette, N. J., (pop. 500), where his father ran a country store. After taking a psychology degree in Middlebury College, Backster got a midshipman's commission in the Navy and went to work for the Army, teaching interrogation to its Counter-Intelligence Corps. He started and headed the CIA's interrogation section. One of his jobs was to brief State Department people headed overseas on how to avoid hazardous situations.

"For example, picking a reliable dentist," he said. "Dentists use Sodium Pentothol as an anesthetic, but it can also be used as a truth serum to make people talk."

After the CIA he worked in Chicago with Leonarde Keeler, the father of lie detection in America. Then Backster started his own lie detection center and school in New York to train polygraph examiners. He's graduated over 200 since 1958; almost all police officers from every corner of the country. About 2,000 trained examiners are using over 1,000 polygraphs.

"They're not machines," Backster said. "They're instruments that register changes in breathing, heart beat and skin resistance to a slight electric shock. Such changes and careful questioning usually detect any deception. Russian agents have beaten everything but polygraph tests."

He related the classic case of Sgt. John Dunlap, the National Security Agency courier. Dunlap submitted to a polygraph examination a year ago when he wanted to change to civilian status. By the time the smoke cleared Dunlap appeared as a heavy horse player, and owner of fancy cars and boats, which he acquired not on his slim army pay, but from a \$100,000 Russian payoff. He committed suicide.

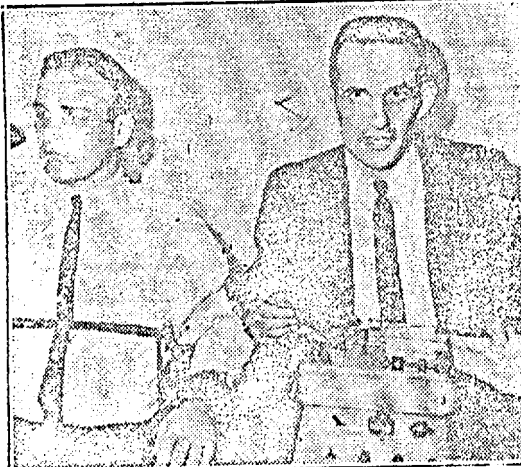
## Tests Not Popular

Polygraph tests aren't popular. Science hasn't accepted them completely. The courts will, if both defense and prosecution agree to them. Under the law no one can be compelled to take one.

"But only liars are afraid of them," Backster insisted.

There are now transistorized, portable polygraphs which are proving highly effective. And Backster, an inventive man, is developing a Tele-meter Polygraph with tabs on a person, instead of wires, which can be heard on an FM band 300 feet away.

"Find a way to discover truth," he said, "and you have a weapon more powerful than any bomb."



Cleve Backster (right) and volunteer test lie detector.

City's, and for the CIA and the National Security Agency. He acts as consultant to most of the other 17 federal agencies using polygraphs and for many clients in private industry.

"Industry uses polygraph for pre-employment testing," Backster said. "Or before they move a man up to a responsible executive's job."

One company's sudden and large losses ceased when polygraph tests disclosed that three out of four employees were stealing money or products.

When an 18-year-old boy was charged with "ring the cash register in a discount house," Backster tested the boy and the night manager who accused him. The manager flunked, finally admitted he had borrowed money from the kid and was trying to frame him.

"I'd rather have 10 that find someone innocent than one that comes up guilty," Backster said.